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Partners in Preservation

Ronald G. Thoman

The Everett Road Covered Bridge is one of the hundreds of significant structures which the National Park Service was mandated by Congress to protect as part of the cultural landscape in Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area (CVNRA). The near-total destruction of the bridge in May 1975 presented the new park (created only the previous December) with a great challenge. With the bridge's restoration in 1986, the challenge was met. The story is symbolic of how this unique urban park was created and continues to develop and prosper today—a story of involvement by local citizens and cooperative action by institutions and governmental agencies at many levels.

Treasure Lost, Regained

Covered bridges were popular in the 19th century because their roofs and sides protected hard-to-replace wooden structural members from weathering. The first in Ohio was built in Columbiana County in 1809. The State once boasted over 2,000 covered bridges, more than any other in the Nation. Time, technology, fire, vandalism, and occasional floods have reduced their present number to less than 200.

The Cuyahoga Valley had its share of covered bridges spanning the Cuyahoga River and tributary streams at several locations. All except one were gone by the time the CVNRA was created in late 1974. The Everett Road Covered Bridge remained among the many historical and scenic treasures to be preserved by the park. However, about midnight on May 21, 1975, a spring storm sent flood waters down Furnace Run. The covered bridge was lifted from its abutments and smashed into the stream bed below.

The covered bridge had been entered on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. For decades it had been very popular with history buffs, preservationists, artists, photographers, and the general public. It was the subject of many paintings and photographs, and the scenic destination of many travelers enjoying recreational outings in the Cuyahoga Valley. Almost immediately after the bridge collapsed, private organizations, citizens, and governmental agencies began restoring it, with the Cuyahoga Valley Association, a citizens' organization which led the effort to get the park established, playing a leadership and coordinating role.

Brief History

In the 1840s, a main road through the Cuyahoga Valley was Everett Pike, connecting the booming canal towns of Boston and Peninsula with the growing city of Akron to the south. Jonathan Hale, one of the Valley's earliest settlers, had petitioned for such a road to pass through his farm in 1810. It apparently was never built, perhaps because the Ohio and Erie Canal, completed through the Valley in 1827, had not yet brought sufficient agricultural and economic activity to the area to warrant the effort. Another prominent resident, Ira Hawkins, petitioned for the road again in 1840. Conditions had significantly changed, and it was built. What is today a quiet and scenic Valley byway was then a main road. Even so,

where it crossed Furnace Run, a major tributary of the Cuyahoga River, there was no bridge, only a ford. Eventually, tragedy would change this primitive condition. One night in 1877, the death of a prominent citizen during a winter storm most likely led directly to the construction of the Everett Road covered bridge.

Although the covered bridge has been part of the Cuyahoga Valley scene for a hundred years, it was badly damaged twice before its near-total destruction in 1975, once in the great 1913 flood, and in 1970 when an overloaded truck partially collapsed it. In each instance, determined citizens and their governments rescued it. When it last fell, modern need, cost, and technology led some to believe that it should be replaced by a modern bridge.

After a 10-year struggle, however, sentiment, history, preservation, and citizen involvement won out. The Everett Road covered bridge once again took its place in the scenery and history, preserved by the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area.

A Dream Comes True

Today, the covered bridge looks as it did when originally constructed. Between 1985 and the fall of 1986, a crew from the Williamsport Preservation Center reconstructed a new bridge on the existing reinforced historic stone abutments to appear as near as possible to the photograph of the 1913 flood-damaged bridge. Work was guided by this photograph as well as by blueprints and drawings of the original Smith Truss Bridge patent (July 1867). The trusses were designed to obtain the additional capacity required for modern codes while maintaining the appearance and design philosophy of the Smith Patent Truss variation used in the earlier bridge. This was accomplished by strengthening the truss work timbers at the ends of the bridge and making them larger than originally called for in the Smith design. The portal braces (diagonal supports) were strengthened by inserting one-inch threaded rods. Shear connector rings were concealed and routed into the diagonal timbers where they cross, taking the load of the bridge off the bolts. This allowed for expansion and contraction of the bridge in changing weather while solving a problem that 19th century bridge builders faced. The 1913 photograph showed the bridge-decking timbers laid lengthwise. These were changed in accordance with the original Smith design of laying the timbers crosswise while creating a more stable bridge floor for modern-day traffic.

The bridge is 100 feet long, 18 feet wide, and 19 feet high, with a wood shingle roof which is painted red, its original color. It is open only to non-vehicular traffic to prolong its life and make its recreational use safer for hikers, bicyclists, skiers, and horseback riders.

A Continuing Story

The Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area was created as the result of citizen desire and activism. In its first decade, it has grown and prospered because of continuing involvement. And the future looks even brighter for this complex and unique urban park. Through volunteerism (CVNRA has one of the largest VIP programs in the NPS); private sector financial support from individuals, foundations, and corporations; interagency cooperation; joint efforts of many other public and private ownerships preserving resources and serving the public in the park; innovative ventures through the historic leasing program; friends; organizations; and other joint efforts between the NPS and a highly supportive community, the park's second decade looks even more promising than its first. The park's many historic treasures will be restored and preserved in this way. American Youth Hostels, Inc., with thousands of dollars of support from local foundations, recently completed restoration of an NPS historic farmstead and opened it as a hostel. Another NPS historic farmstead will be restored and opened as a bed and breakfast inn through the historic leasing program in 1987. Other structures have been or soon will be leased, restored, and preserved as private homes, offices, and other uses. And the cooperative effort goes well beyond historic preservation too. Other groups, such as the Cuyahoga Valley Trails Council, build

and maintain trails and develop trail guide publications. Still others join NPS in funding and conducting festivals and interpretive activities.

CVNRA will continue to emerge as one of the great parks in the National Park System because of a strong partnership and cooperation between the NPS and the communities and people it serves.

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The National Register After 20 Years

Carol D. Shull

Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in Preservation News, *published by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, as part of the commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act. It has been updated and edited for publication here.*

In addition to comprising the Nation's list of historic resources worthy of preservation, the National Register of Historic Places is a national evaluation and registration system that exists at the heart of the national preservation program. The role the National Register has played in focusing attention and concern on the heritage of the Nation and the way the Register has evolved can tell us much about the growth and changes in the preservation movement in the last 20 years.

In 1966, the National Register included 868 National Historic Landmarks and historic units of the National Park System. In 1987, over 47,000 properties are listed in the National Register, with about 9,000 more determined eligible for listing. Four million properties have been included in State inventories, for the most part compiled using National Register criteria and standards. The National Register is not a comprehensive catalogue of the Nation's historic resources. It is a list of evaluated properties to consult during project planning; most importantly, it is a consistent system for documenting, evaluating, and registering historic resources. National Register criteria for evaluation and documentation standards are used by every Federal agency, State, and Territory of the United States to identify historic properties for consideration in making planning and development decisions. The National Register's broad criteria, written soon after the passage of the Act, and the National Register nomination form have remained virtually unchanged in 20 years, while the National Register program has matured with the preservation movement.

In this national system, the National Park Service (NPS) sets standards and guidelines for documentation, evaluation, and registration, and the States, Federal agencies, local governments, and the public conduct these activities. Nominations to the National Register received several levels of professional review and evaluation, first in the States, and then in Washington. The system has become more sophisticated as standards and guidelines have improved, as colleges and universities have trained professionals for the preservation field, and as experience in identification and evaluation of historic resources has increased.

Early Years

Under the early system, States slowly began to inventory and nominate historic properties to the National Register, and it became clear that it would be many years before the National Register could be an authoritative list of the Nation's historic properties. In the meantime, significant historic properties were being destroyed by Federally-assisted projects without benefit of review by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

In 1971, Executive Order 11593 directed Federal agencies to locate, inventory, and nominate their historic properties, and to ask the Secretary of the Interior for an opinion concerning a property's significance before taking any action that might harm an eligible property. The NPS asked each Federal agency to appoint a liaison officer, establish procedures to accept Federal nominations, and begin to make official determinations of eligibility on properties, all of which furthered the institutionalization of preservation programs in the Federal agencies.

Interest Grows

The decade of the 1970s saw a marked increase in the number of listings, as Federal historic preservation grant funds increased, and State and local preservation programs, and, to a lesser extent, Federal agency programs gained strength. Listings, which hovered at 1,000 a year in 1971, rose to over 4,400 a year by 1980. Currently there are about 3,500 new listings a year. As interest in historic preservation grew, Congress passed new laws which added benefits and protection to properties qualifying for the National Register.

In 1974, the Housing and Community Development Act made local surveys of historic resources eligible for funding under Community Development Block Grants, dramatically increasing the funding available for local surveys. In response, the National Register published *Guidelines for Local Surveys, A Basis for Preservation Planning*, to encourage communities to conduct high quality surveys from which properties could be nominated to the National Register, and to use these surveys for preservation planning.

To further encourage the use of survey data in the registration of historic resources, the National Register instituted two types of multiple property nominations, which provide an efficient way to nominate properties identified in surveys of a specific geographical area, or of a specific historic theme. The concept has been so successful that by 1986 over half of all National Register listings were nominated as part of multiple property submissions.

The Tax Reform Act of 1976 and the subsequent amendments to the Internal Revenue Code influenced the National Register both by contributing to increased listings each year and by making structures in State and locally designated historic districts eligible for rehabilitation tax benefits if the districts met the requirements for Register listing. National Park Service certification of about 130 such historic districts to date has further broadened the National Register evaluation and registration system.

The impact on the National Register of the 1980 Amendments to the National Historic Preservation Act reflected the growing strength and importance of State and local preservation programs, and also concerns about the rights of private property owners. The Amendments gave private property owners the ability to prevent listing their property in the National Register if a majority of the owners of nominated private property object to listing. A nomination still can be evaluated and placed on the National Register's list of eligible properties, even if the majority of its owners object to listing. Only about 706 properties have been determined eligible because of owners' objections to listing.

Roles Defined

In the 1980 Amendments, Congress also acknowledged the increased professionalism and experience of States by allowing properties to be added to the National Register without substantive review as long as nominations were reviewed on a spot-check basis, or as otherwise necessary to ensure the integrity of the National Register. The NPS has subsequently reduced its role in property-specific decisions to one of reviewing technical and procedural aspects of all nominations, while evaluating some nominations to ensure professional adequacy and consistency.

In addition to authorizing decentralization to States, the 1980 Amendments institutionalized the participation of Federal agencies, local governments, and the public in the National Register process. So far, about 330 local governments meeting professional standards and certified to participate in the national program have been given a greater authority in the nomination process. These governments have the opportunity to comment on the nomination of properties within their jurisdiction, to prevent the State from nominating a property if both the local preservation commission and the chief elected local official oppose it, to carry out their own identification activities, and to prepare National Register nominations. The public, too, has a greater role in National Register decisionmaking; anyone can now appeal the refusal of States and Federal agencies to nominate properties to the National Register.

The 1980 Amendments also better defined the role of the Department of the Interior in setting standards and guidelines to be used by all participants in the national program. The

National Register staff has increasingly focused its attention more on oversight of State historic preservation programs, which must carry out their work in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Identification, Evaluation, and Registration, than on decisions about individual nominations. The National Register staff now also provides more direct assistance to individual States and Federal agencies on such topics as developing historic contexts and assessing resource types of growing interest: maritime resources, historic landscapes, vernacular architecture, and recent properties such as those associated with the Depression and World War II. Guidelines on these and similar topics are published as part of the *National Register Bulletin* series.

In 1986, the NPS completed its entry of all National Register listings into an automated information system, which greatly enhances the value of the National Register as a planning tool. Properties determined eligible for listing have also been added to the National Register Information System. States and Federal agencies should eventually be able to enter nomination data directly into the data base. (Watch for more information on the automation of the National Register in the August issue of the *CRM Bulletin.)*

The need now is to find an efficient and responsible way to extend official register status to eligible properties in Federal, State, and local inventories. The answer lies in further decentralization of decisionmaking, and more efficient documentation and designation methods. These are the challenges for the future.

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Preserving Russian Heritage in Alaska

Kathleen Lidfors

An Aleut community in identical government houses on an island in the Bering Sea. Thirty-seven wooden churches with triple-barred crosses and onion-shaped domes. A popular port-of-call for luxury liners in southeast Alaska. An uninhabited, jewel-green island in the Gulf of Alaska. What do these have in common? A unique Russian-American history and the involvement of the NPS in recording and preserving their heritage.

Of the 15 NPS areas in Alaska, at least 6 have Russian-period associations. Of these, three have significant historic resources, and one, Sitka National Historical Park, was established to commemorate the battle which assured a Russian future there and to interpret the culture of a native people forever affected by that event. In addition, some 14 of 43 National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) are significant for their part in the Russian exploration, settlement, and continuing heritage in Alaska. Because park cultural resources programs and HABS/HAER, National Register, and NHL programs operate out of the same office in the Alaska Region, there has been a beneficial cross-pollination of technical expertise and historical resource in efforts to document and preserve Alaska's Russian-American past.

Focus on Sitka

Sitka, once the capital and principal seaport in Russia's colonial empire and now a favorite stop for cruise ships, is the focus of much of this activity. After more than 10 years of research and restoration work at Sitka NHP, the doors of the 1845 Russian Bishop's House will open again in 1988.

Meticulously reproduced wallpapers and the exquisite details of the restored Bishop's chapel contrast with the rough log construction in a powerful statement of Russian civilization in a newly colonized land. (See Vol. 10, No. 2 of the *CRM Bulletin)*

Just a few blocks down Lincoln Street stands St. Michael Cathedral (NHL) where Bishop Innocent served. Spiritual center of Russian America, the cathedral's iconography and architecture represent the traditions of Russian Orthodoxy and its role in the cultural change of Alaska Natives. When a devastating fire destroyed the cathedral in 1966, HABS drawings, done in 1962, made reconstruction possible. The church treasures, saved by quick-thinking Sitkans, were restored through an Historic Preservation Grant and local fundraising efforts; they now grace the cathedral's interior.

Effective New Program

The new NHL Technical Assistance program has been used effectively in the past two years to assist in the preservation of three additional churches at distant outposts of the old colonial empire. Detailed building condition assessments and cost estimates have been prepared for St. George the Great Martyr Church (St. George, Pribilof Islands), Holy Ascension Orthodox Church (Unalaska, Aleutian Islands), and Holy Assumption Orthodox Church (Kenai). From this initial NPS effort, a statewide task force of church officials, Russian-American scholars, and preservation advocates has been formed to accomplish the inventory and eventual restoration of the most significant religious treasures in the National Historic Landmark churches.

Some interesting research and preservation planning have been accomplished through the more routine aspects of the Landmarks program as well. A recent landmark inspection at the Bering Expedition Landing site on Kayak Island provided an opportunity to obtain new information about a site which commemorates the Russians' first landing on North

American soil and their first documented contact with an indigenous North American culture.

To take full advantage of a trip to this inaccessible island, NPS cultural resources staff put together a volunteer research team comprised of the translator/editor of the expedition journals, a U.S. Forest Service archeologist, and a Native ethno-historian—with transportation provided by the U.S. Coast Guard. The results of the literature study and field work will ultimately benefit not only the landmark site, but also Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve which has resources related to this early exploratory phase of the Russian period.

Coastal Plan

In another remote setting, 300 miles out in the Bering Sea, a Landmark boundary review of the Fur Seal Rookeries (Pribilof Islands) is providing the Aleut community of St. Paul with information needed to incorporate historic preservation into their Coastal Management Plan. St. Paul, along with neighboring St. George, has been the site of a fur seal industry so valuable that the U.S. Government retained control of the labor force as well as the resource until the 1960s. Brought to the islands by the Russians 200 years ago, the Pribilof Aleuts have retained their Russian heritage in language, names, and religion. Their Aleut heritage is also reflected in language, social structure, and archeological sites throughout the islands. Their American patrimony is expressed most visibly in the rows of concrete and frame houses and wooden industrial buildings that line the hillsides.

The community's sense of its history is strong. The NPS, through the NHL boundary review program, has been able to assist in preserving this heritage. The results of an intensive building and site survey accomplished in 1985 will be incorporated into the comprehensive plan for St. Paul as the basis for historic district zoning and priorities for restoration and adaptive re-use.

Sometimes unorthodox, sometimes hazardous, sometimes stressed with cultural differences and residual hostility toward the Federal Government, cultural resources preservation work in Alaska always requires a high level of commitment from staff and the ability to use to the fullest all available internal and external programs.

When this happens, as it has with Russian-American heritage resources in Alaska, the Service benefits. The body of information related to historic park resources is enhanced—as is the Service's viability in the community-at-large.

Kathleen Lidfors was an historian in the Alaska Regional Office and is now stationed at Apostle Islands National Lakeshore.

Surveying Bering Land Bridge

Kenneth Schoenberg

Bering Land Bridge National Preserve (BELA) lies on the northwestern edge of the Seward Peninsula which juts into the Chukchi Sea, an arm of the Arctic Ocean. It also forms one side of the Bering Strait. On the other side lies Siberia. BELA is a treeless, rolling plain covered by tundra. Caribou and bears roam the interior and marine mammals frequent the coast. Hunters and gatherers have lived there for more than 10,000 years, leaving cultural remains scattered over the landscape. It is the task of the archeological survey crew to locate, investigate, preserve, and interpret those sites.

A Survey and Research Branch has been added this year to the Cultural Resources Division in the Alaska Region. Because of the nature of Alaskan fieldwork, the branch is needed to handle many of the multi-year special projects that the division manages. It takes experience, equipment, administrative capability and coordination, logistical and professional expertise, and a great deal of hard work to assemble, equip, maintain and supply crews that operate, for the most part, in remote locations during short and intense field seasons. Any major field work in Alaska's parks must be done during the three-month "window of opportunity" in which summer weather allows access to the cultural resources of the parks. (Partial exceptions to this general rule are two national historical parks—Klondike Gold Rush and Sitka.) Most of the field camps are in remote locations, reachable only by air (usually helicopter), with minimal facilities. Despite the primitive conditions that increase difficulty, cost, and limit field work to short and intensive efforts, the work goes on and there is no shortage of enthusiastic and skilled people to carry out the projects. Currently, the branch has three major projects underway and several more are scheduled for next year.

Projects

One special project is a cultural resources survey of the BELA. This new area, created to preserve remnants of the land bridge over which many animals, plants, and humans migrated to the New World, is the subject of an archeological survey to locate as many cultural sites as possible. Unfortunately, a small crew of four seasonals, headed by Jeanne Schaaf, could not cover the whole 2 million acres of BELA in 2 field seasons of 12 weeks each, especially since most of the work was being done out of tent camps and on foot. Despite arctic weather, mosquitoes, and terrain, over 200 sites have been located. These are enough that a model of site location and type can be developed and used by management and professionals.

The largest project is a multi-year, multi-disciplinary and multi-park effort to inventory the cultural resources on the approximately 2,000 mining claims in Alaska's parks. Because the Survey and Research Branch currently has only two permanent people on staff, it is necessary to hire large numbers of seasonals to do the needed field work during the short summer season. Every effort is being made to complete the survey and build an archeological information base in three to five years so that mining plans of operation can be evaluated as they are submitted to park management.

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Civil War Research by Computer

Woody Harrell

One of my most memorable experiences as a front line interpreter occurred at the Chickamauga Battlefield information desk on a cold, wet day in February 1978. A middle-aged couple, the first visitors of the day, walked in the building about 10:30 a.m. After I chatted with them for several minutes, introducing the park and orienting them to the tour route, the man handed me a slip of paper with the names and units of two Civil War veterans. The two young soldiers, one from Ohio and one from Kentucky, were great-grandfathers of the man and his wife, and family tradition said both had taken part in the Battle of Chickamauga. He asked if I could supply any information.

We adjourned to the park library where, grabbing typewritten indexes and other references, I first traced the Ohio infantryman's unit to the left end of the Union line to General George Thomas' XIV Corps, then down through division and brigade levels to a location on the edge of the Kelly Farm field. I then turned my attention to the wife's Kentucky ancestor to pinpoint his location on the field.

Somewhat confused, I was unable to find a Kentucky unit with that regiment number on the list of Union forces. Then remembering that Kentucky was one of four states with troops fighting on both sides in the Chattanooga Campaign, I quickly located the regiment on the southern side. I began tracing their location in General Polk's right wing of the Confederate Army. With each successive level I moved closer and closer again to the Kelly Farm until finally I marked a location in the woods beyond the field's edge less than 100 yards in front of the other great-grandfather's unit. Two young men with different backgrounds and beliefs had gone off to war, and through chance had ended up in opposing battle lines at the edge of the Kelly Farm. For two days in early autumn their two armies hammered each other in what would become the war's bloodiest battle. Yet, somehow, these two men survived the Battle of Chickamauga as well as two more years of fighting. At war's end they returned home to start their lives again, married, and had children. Two more generations followed, and two of these great-grandchildren met and married. The reunion they represented went unnoticed as their separate heritages were reduced to two names on a small slip of paper. Yet, on that dreary February morning, these visitors were able to make a connection with their past.

Data Base

In later years I have often thought, what if that couple had arrived six months later at the height of the summer crunch? Would whoever was on the desk have had time to do the research to help these folks get in touch with their past? What if they had known only name and rank, and not regiment? Could we have helped them then?

With the introduction of computers at the park level, historian-interpreters have the power to store and retrieve large amounts of data that could put such information easily at the finger tips of park visitors. Imagine walking up to a keyboard and screen at an information desk, and entering the name of a Civil War veteran. Instantly, the screen lists the ranks, units, and states of several soldiers with the same name. Choosing one brings more information and choices for additional data, such as a brief regimental history, or the location of monuments to the unit.

Because one out of every eight Americans was in uniform between 1861 and 1865, certainly a large number of visitors to parks have ancestors who saw Civil War service, and would be interested in learning more about them. Many of our visitors probably expect we can already provide such information. I think about the numerous visitors to "Chick-Chatt" who asked directions to the monument on Lookout Mountain that contained the names of all

those who fought in the 1863 campaign. Those wanting to see it were usually not receptive to an explanation that such a monument would be almost impossible to build as it would require over 130,000 names! If not on bronze plaques, we can today store that basic information and much more on magnetic disks. While stationed at Manassas National Battlefield I started to think about such a data base system, what it might contain, and how it might be assembled. I would like to share some thoughts on this idea.

Detailed planning on such a project would require the skills of both the historian and the computer programmer/technician. The Civil War has been called the best documented war in history. There is a wealth of information available. A majority of states have published the service records of their Civil War veterans in one form or other. The historian must look at this information, and both select and standardize what should be used. The decisions made will determine the variety of purposes for which relative, researcher, interpreter, genealogist, or buff can use the data.

Many men used different spellings or even different names at various times in the war. Many moved from regiment to regiment or even from side to side. Troop rosters for some states, especially those published early, list only the basics: name, rank, dates in and out of service. Others go into much greater detail: birth date, eye color, or occupation. With over 6,000 expeditions, campaigns, battles, skirmishes, engagements, and actions (to list a few of the designations), there are dozens of fights known by two or more names. Information on casualties would obviously be a category of great interest. Information on those killed should be pretty straight forward. But because mortally wounded were often not later changed to "deceased" in casualty figures, the line between killed and wounded figures can become somewhat blurred. And adding to the complexity are those soldiers wounded twice or more. A data system must take into account the huge range of possibilities that millions of service records might include. If information is to be retrievable, it must be standardized into a common format. The programmer must develop a system that allows the user to search, sort, and use the data. If the project is to succeed, he must also prepare instructions in an easy "cookbook" style so that many people could learn to use it easily and quickly. The program itself should use numerous "menus" to reduce the data entry to quick choices that eliminate most of the guesswork and decision making.

Getting Started

Where does a project like this come from? With over two dozen sites that preserve Civil War battlefields or installations, the NPS is an obvious candidate to get it started. The actual computer routine to handle the data would apparently not be that difficult to develop. At Manassas we used the dBase III program to analyze sample data from small sections of several Virginia regiments. The power of the computer to manipulate the information was obvious (e.g., list the privates killed on July 21, 1861; compute the average age of the 2nd Virginia). Who would administer the system and how the huge amount of data would be entered are tougher questions.

Data input is obviously the most difficult part of this project. The assembled armies at single battles like Gettysburg, Chickamauga, or Second Manassas would include over 100,00 men. Although no single park would have the staff or budget to tackle such a massive project, a systematic approach involving several areas could start having immediate benefits. If the data were entered by regiment, each new unit would prove useful to the researcher as well as to particular locations where those troops were involved. Manassas and Antietam would cover many of the same men as to a lesser degree would Stones River, Chickamauga-Chattanooga, and Kennesaw Mountain. An exchange of data would lessen the labor intensive nature of the data entry, and as more and more people and locations become involved, a developing ripple effect would repay the initial investment many times over. With a standardized format, the NPS could recruit help from many sources to chip away at the crushing load of data. Some obvious candidates come to mind. Parks could use volunteers. Graduate students may be able to incorporate parts of this project into thesis or

dissertation work. Recent biographers of Civil War units may have already put information about their troops on computers in a retrievable form. Archives, state agencies, and non-NPS Civil War sites may wish to join such a national information network. Civil War roundtable groups, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Sons of Confederate Veterans, or various reenactment units may be interested in "adopting" units and being responsible for adding them to such a data base.

If the format were designed in a way that the records for the 1,000 to 1,700 men in a particular unit were contained on a single floppy disk, then it would be an easy matter to establish dozens of work stations. The more people involved, obviously the faster the project might proceed. A service record data base could be integrated with material from such standard references as Dyer's Compendium or an inventory of Civil War markers or monuments, and become even more useful. By connecting the system to national cemeteries and other areas that maintain graves of Civil War veterans, the scope of information available to park visitors would be even broader.

While there is no funding as yet, if the usefulness of such a project were proven to be great enough, it could easily draw the interest of outside groups or cooperating associations to get it started. Later funding strategies might include charging other agencies while providing the service free to NPS visitors. A small fee for a hard copy of retrieved data might also help defray the cost of the system. Details of the system and answers to all specific concerns are still in the discussion stage. My purpose here has been to pose the question, "Is there sufficient interest in providing public access of Civil War soldier information at NPS sites to pursue such a project?" I, for one, believe it is an idea whose time has come.

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